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EXPERIENCING GOD TOGETHER: A PHENOMENOLOGY OF CAMPUS
REVIVAL AND ITS IMPACT ON STUDENT FAITH AND SPIRITUALITY

A thesis

Presented to

The School of Social Sciences, Education, & Business
Department of Higher Education and Student Development
Taylor University
Upland, Indiana

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts in Higher Education and Student Development

by

Caleb Hoelscher

May 2021

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**Higher Education and Student Development
Taylor University
Upland, Indiana**

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

MASTER'S THESIS

This is to certify that the Thesis of

Caleb Hoelscher

entitled

Experiencing God Together: A Phenomenology of Campus Revival and Its Impact on
Student Faith and Spirituality

has been approved by the Examining Committee for the thesis requirement for the

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Abstract

Campus revivals are a significant historical phenomenon in higher education, and interest in faith and spirituality is gaining a significant amount of attention in the student development literature. However, there are currently no studies exploring the connections between campus revival and faith and spirituality from a student development perspective. In order to fill this gap in the literature, two questions guided this study: What is the shared experience of students who participated in a campus revival? What impact, if any, does participation in a campus revival have on student faith and spirituality? The study employed a phenomenological design, interviewing nine alumni who all participated in a campus revival at their institution in 1995. The results indicated that the essence of the revival experience consisted of a unique, emotional group experience that included both an awareness of the presence of God and some involvement in confession. In terms of impact on faith and spirituality, the data reveal that the revival positively impacted both their relationships with God and with others for most participants with considerable variation in the degree and manner in which they were affected. The revival affected one participant's faith in a novel way, in part due to her prior faith experiences. Based on this study, the researcher recommends all-campus faith and spirituality programming, providing opportunities for appropriate vulnerability, seeking the presence of God for one's campus both individually and corporately, and gaining a greater awareness of students' faith histories. The researcher also discussed distinguishing between healthy and unhealthy revival as well as the role of the institution in navigating a revival.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

It is well established that faith played a key role in the founding of American higher education as denominations sought to train their clergymen (Marsden, 1994; Ringenberg, 2006; Rudolph, 1990; Thelin, 2019). Then, in the late nineteenth century, higher education gradually began to secularize: first, the state universities followed by elite private institutions and then, after the First World War, most of the major denominational colleges (Ringenberg, 2006). Rather than taking a pluralistic outlook on religious faith, nonbelief and secularism became the prevailing mode of thought by the mid-twentieth century, pushing faith and spirituality to the margins (Marsden, 1994; Ringenberg, 2006). In fact, Ringenberg (2006) notes that, by the 1980s, higher education “exerted a primarily negative effect on the spiritual development of its students” (p. 113). In the last twenty years, however, there has been a resurgence in the study of student faith and spirituality as a pressing issue for higher education professionals at secular and faith-based institutions alike (Astin, 2004; Beers, 2003; Love, 2001). Higher education professionals are taking greater notice of the need to tend to the faith and spiritual development of their students, not only because it is associated with traditional college outcomes, but also because it is “fundamental to students’ lives” (Astin et al., 2011, p. 1).

What is Student Faith and Spirituality?

Astin et al. (2011) define spirituality as

The values that we hold most dear, our sense of who we are and where we come from, our beliefs about why we are here—the meaning and purpose that we see in

our work and our life—and our sense of connectedness to one another and to the world around us. (p. 4)

The two major theorists on faith development are James Fowler and Sharon Daloz Parks. Fowler (1981) defines faith as “a person’s or group’s way of moving into the force field of life.” He goes on to say, “It is our way of finding coherence in and giving meaning to the multiple forces and relations that make up our lives” (p. 4). Parks (2019), who utilizes Fowler, but applies it specifically to traditional college age students and higher education, defines faith as “the activity of seeking and discovering meaning in the most comprehensive dimensions of our experience,” which are self, others, world, and “God” (p. 11). For the purposes of this study, faith and spirituality will be used in conjunction. The researcher will mainly rely on Park’s definition for the term “faith and spirituality” because of its authority within the student development literature and its broad applicability.

What is Revival?

American higher education historians often mention the revivals that have happened on college campuses over their history, specifically in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (Orr, 1971). For instance, Rudolph (1990) writes that the way religion exerted its influence on campus was not compulsory chapel attendance or other authoritarian measures enacted to coerce students into religious duty; rather, “the really effective agency of religion in the life of the colleges was the revival, that almost unexplainable combination of confession, profession, joy, and tears which brought many young college men into the church and into the ministry” (p. 77). Rudolph (1990) even goes on to say that college leaders in this era would believe that they or God had failed if each student had not experienced a revival during his or her four years on campus.

Although Rudolph (1990) calls 1858 the last great revival year and Harrold (2004) notes their decline in the 1870s, campus revivals have continued into the twentieth century, still occurring in the same manner in Christian colleges and in different forms within Christian organizations on secular campuses (Orr, 1971).

The term revival literally means “to wake up and live” (Coleman, 1995/2002, p. 13). Other words used to describe this phenomenon are “renewal,” “refreshing,” or “awakening.” Although it often involves conversions of people from other faiths, revival focuses on members of the Christian church, specifically during a time of moral and spiritual decline (Cairns, 1986). The purpose of a revival, then, is the return of a group of Christians to this higher state of spirituality from which they have fallen (Cairns, 1986). It is usually precipitated by individuals or groups within the community praying, reading the Bible (the Word), and seeking God for the revival of their community.

Despite general understanding of the meaning of revival, scholars have reached no consensus on a precise meaning of the term. Based on the researcher’s review of the literature, there are number of themes common across many revivals: the presence of God and spiritual experience; conviction and confession of sin; unity and controversy; individual commitment; effects on individuals: morality, discipline, and academic achievement; and effects on community: ministry, missions, and social reform. These themes were chosen because of their connections to student faith and spirituality as well as their application to campus revivals in particular. In addition, Coleman (1995/2002), emphasizes three central elements of revival despite variety: a group experience of the divine (“the divine hallmark”), “personal transformation,” and “new vitality for the church” (pp. 14–17). This study will utilize Cairns’s (1986) definition of revival: “the work of the Holy Spirit in restoring the people of God to a more vital spiritual life,

witness, and work by prayer and the word after repentance in crisis for their spiritual decline” (p. 22). However, the consensus of the campus community and the self-understanding of the participants that experienced the event will be used to identify the revival as such.

A campus revival, on the other hand, is not difficult to define. It is simply a revival that takes place at an institution of higher learning, involving members of the campus community.

Purpose of Study

Considering the rising interest in the student development literature on faith and spirituality as well as the historical legacy of campus revival as an expression of and influence on students’ spiritual lives in the recent and distant past, it is helpful to consider how these two constructs relate. Collier (1995) notes that “the literature on revival tends to view revival through a wide angle lens of social impact” (p. 3). This means that there is very little empirical literature on how revival affects the individual person, apart from personal accounts. Mclaughlin (2015) studied the impact of the Wheaton Revival of 1995 on the individual through the lens of transformative learning theory. Collier (1995) studied the impact of the Asbury Revival of 1970 on the individual through the lens of Christian spiritual formation. The current study explored campus revival through the lens of the student development theory on faith and spirituality. The two questions this study addressed are as follows:

1. What is the shared experience of students who participated in a campus revival?
2. What impact, if any, does participation in a campus revival have on student faith and spirituality?

Chapter 2

Literature Review

This literature review will briefly cover the history of spirituality in higher education, the emergence of the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities, theoretical foundations for spiritual development, and how spirituality is developed in higher education. Furthermore, the literature review will briefly summarize the history of revivalism in higher education, outline common revival themes that suggest how revivals impact student faith and spirituality, and provide the results of two studies that specifically addressed individual impact.

Student Faith and Spirituality

History of Faith and Spirituality in Higher Education

It is well-established that faith played a key role in the founding of American higher education as denominations sought a learned clergy (Marsden, 1994; Ringenberg, 2006; Rudolph, 1990; Thelin, 2019). In fact, until the late nineteenth century, institutions were primarily Protestant Christian with explicitly religious goals (Ringenberg, 2006). Then, as American higher education progressed through the late nineteenth century and into the twentieth, it began to change “its spiritual direction” (p. 113), and by the 1960s, scholars largely agreed that students’ commitment to religious values decreased during their four years at college (Ringenberg, 2006). Rather than becoming pluralistic or interfaith as many pursuing spirituality in higher education are now (Kazanjian & Laurence, 2000), many institutions had largely become secular. As Marsden (1994) puts

it, American higher education went “from Protestant establishment to established non-belief” where faith and spirituality were pushed to the margins.

However, higher education is now experiencing a resurgence of interest in faith and spirituality. Building on trends established in previous decades, Waggoner (2016) claims that “a more open treatment of spirituality in higher education” had developed by the 1990s in large part due to the writings of Parker Palmer (p. 149). Then, after Sharon Daloz Parks in 2000 published *Big Questions, Worthy Dreams*—a reworking of her 1986 work *The Critical Years*—addressing emerging adult faith development, the higher education literature on religion and spirituality began to expand more quickly (Waggoner, 2016). In response to the growing literature base, Astin et al. (2011) built on the data from the University of California, Los Angeles’s Higher Education Research Institute and surveyed over 14,000 students about their spiritual lives. They published the results of their study in *Cultivating the Spirit*. In this work, they state what has become a commonly held viewpoint: Spirituality matters because it enhances other college outcomes and because it is “fundamental to students’ lives” (p. 1).

The Council for Christian Colleges and Universities

Some Christian colleges and universities resisted secularization, faith and spirituality remaining central to their missions. In addition, new Christian institutions arose during and following the secularization movement (Ringenberg, 2006). Among these continuing Christian colleges was a general cooperative spirit, leading many to join the Christian College Coalition, founded in 1976 and renamed the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities (CCCU) in 1999 (Ringenberg, 2006). The CCCU currently has 180 member institutions around the world, with a mission “to advance the cause of Christ-centered higher education and to help our institutions transform lives by faithfully

relating scholarship to biblical truth” (Council for Christian Colleges and Universities, n.d.). Institutions within the CCCU share three basic educational commitments: the integration of Biblical truth “throughout the academic enterprise,” “the moral and spiritual formation of students,” and the graduation of students who “make a difference for the common good as redemptive voices in the world” (Council for Christian Colleges and Universities, n.d.).

Defining and Measuring Faith and Spirituality

Given the rising interest in faith and spirituality in secular and faith-based institutions alike, this raises the question: How does one define these ambiguous constructs? First, it is important to consider religion in relationship to spirituality. According to Patton et al. (2016), religious identity is a collective identity associated with a particular religious group or tradition, while spiritual identity is a unique personal identity that “is not directly associated with feelings of belonging to a valued religious group” (p. 197). Although this is a helpful distinction, Hill et al. (2000) note the short history of their separation and warn against allowing a wide chasm to develop between them, since “virtually all religions are interested in matters spiritual” and “every form of religious and spiritual expression occurs in some social context” (p. 64). In the present study, participants were involved in a revival in a Christian Protestant religious context. Religious themes will be viewed as an expression of the participants’ faith and spirituality.

Although faith has been variously defined, Fowler (1981) and Parks (2019) offer descriptions that emphasize faith as a process of meaning making that is both relational and universal, involving both affect and intellect. Fowler (1981) defines faith as “our way of finding coherence in and giving meaning to the multiple forces and relations that make

up our lives” (p. 4). He refers to the basic “covenantal pattern” of faith made up of self, other, and a shared center(s) of value and power, which may be a God or gods, a principle, or an ethos. Similarly, Parks (2019) defines faith as “the activity of seeking and discovering meaning in the most comprehensive dimensions of our experience” (p. 11), in which the four dimensions are self, others, world, and “God.” According to Love (2001),

self is the individual meaning-maker, other includes the immediate interactions and relationships with those beyond the self, world is the recognition of the existence and influence of others beyond one’s immediate relationships and interactions, and ‘God’ is the center of power and value for the individual. (p. 8)

From the above description, it is clear that both Parks and Fowler view faith as a verb, not just a noun, and as a human universal, not just particular to those who practice a religion or believe in God as an infinite being.

Lastly, Astin et al. (2011) define spirituality as the values we hold most dear, our sense of who we are and where we come from, our beliefs about why we are here—the meaning and purpose that we see in our work and our life—and our sense of connectedness to one another and to the world around us. (p. 4)

However, Hill et al. (2000) note that definitions of spirituality can become so broad that the term loses its distinctiveness, arguing that the core of spirituality is “the search for the sacred,” in which search is defined as “attempts to identify, articulate, maintain, or transform” and sacred is defined as “a divine being, divine object, Ultimate Reality, or Ultimate Truth as perceived by the individual” (Hill et al., 2000, p. 66).

Astin et al. (2011) also provide higher education with measures of spirituality (Spiritual Quest, Equanimity, Ethic of Caring, Ecumenical Worldview, and Charitable Involvement) as well as measures of religiousness (Religious Commitment, Religious Engagement, Religious/Social Conservatism, Religious Struggle, and Religious Skepticism). These measures emerged from the results of their College Students' Beliefs and Values Survey. Together, the measures represent a single instrument designed to assess the lives of college students for any religious or spiritual perspective or lack thereof (Astin et al., 2011).

Theoretical Foundations of Development

Next, it is appropriate to consider a few major theories and models that describe the development of faith and spirituality. Firstly, Fowler is most known for his seven stages of faith development. This literature review will focus only on stages two, three, and four because, according to a study of faith change at Christian Liberal Arts colleges, these were the three stages represented in the freshman and senior interviewees (Holcomb & Nonneman, 2004). In stage two, mythic-literal faith, individuals make sense of their lives in stories and are largely limited to interpreting beliefs and symbols literally (Fowler, 1981). Stage three, synthetic conventional faith, may arise in early adolescence. Individuals in stage three are able to integrate and reflect on the many stories they receive from school, the media, and their religious community (Patton et al., 2016). They can consolidate these stories into value systems, but the systems of meaning remain largely hidden from their own view, and instead these systems are based chiefly on outside authorities and expectations from significant relationships in their communities (Fowler, 1981). The opportunity to move into stage four, individuative-reflective faith, arises when authorities do not agree or when the individual is confronted with multiple worldviews,

which prompts reflection on how they formed their beliefs and values. In this stage, individuals may begin to develop their own faith in more explicit, conceptual terms. Although this stage frequently occurs when individuals leave home “and most appropriately takes form in young adulthood,” many people do not develop into this stage until mid-life; in fact, some adults never reach stage four (Fowler, 1981, p. 182).

It is important to recognize Fowler’s (1981) distinction between stages of faith and conversion. The former is a transformation in the *form* of one’s faith; in other words, the structure or style of how one engages in faith. Conversion, on the other hand, transforms the *content* of one’s faith. Fowler defines conversion as “a significant recentering of one’s previous conscious or unconscious images of value and power, and the conscious adoption of new set of master stories in the commitment to reshape one’s life in a new community of interpretation and action” (p. 282). Conversion and stage transformation can interact in any number of ways (Fowler, 1981). Fowler (1981) also cites another type of faith transformation: an “intensification experience,” in which a religious experience has the impact of “renewing or revivifying a person’s faith outlook, but with neither a structural change nor a content change” (p. 285). These details are included because of the significance of conversion and revivifying commitments to the faith in revival.

Parks (2019) builds on Fowler’s research by considering how higher education can facilitate faith development (Patton et al., 2016). She also inserts a stage of development in-between Fowler’s stages three and four, which is meant to more clearly describe faith in emerging adulthood, a developmental period characterized by exploring identity, instability, self-focus, a sense of being in-between, and possibility (Parks, 2019). Parks (2019) describes this process of faith development in three interwoven aspects:

forms of knowing, forms of dependence, and forms of community. In forms of knowing, Parks (2019) contends that emerging adults are in a time of “probing commitment” in which they realize that truth is not simply rested in authority, but that not all viewpoints are equally valid. As they explore aspects of their faith, they consider commitment tentatively. In forms of dependence, Parks (2019) says that emerging adults develop a “fragile inner-dependence” in which they are beginning to have a sense of owned selfhood, but it requires nurturing and encouragement to develop fully. In forms of community, Parks (2019) emphasizes the importance of “mentoring communities” that can serve as “networks of belonging” as emerging adults tests their new faith outlooks in contexts of differing faith perspectives (Parks, 2000, p. 135).

Love and Talbot (1999) summarize the following elements of spiritual development specifically for student affairs educators. Instead of using stages, like Parks and Fowler, they express development in terms of “processes that are interrelated and often are in evidence concurrently” (p. 364). They argue that spiritual development consists of seeking authenticity, genuineness, and wholeness; continually transcending one’s current locus of centrality; developing a greater connectedness to self and others; deriving meaning, purpose, and direction in one’s life; and an increasing openness to exploring a relationship with a higher power (Love & Talbot, 1999).

Beers (2003) developed a model for faith development that would be distinctive for Christian educators, consisting of four concentric circles. The inner circle, Altering Self-Recognition, represents a person who only sees the world as it relates to the self but may have transcendent experiences in which they recognize the world outside the self. The second circle, Recognition of a Creator, represents a person who grasps the world outside the self, recognizes a creator God, and understands that God is greater than the

self. The third circle, *Redemption of His Image in Me*, represents a person who seeks to be transformed into the image of Christ, partnering with the Holy Spirit to “redeem every aspect of her experience” (p. 28). Finally, the fourth circle, *Redemption of His Image in the World* represents a person who partners with God to redeem the world and other lives. The goal of this development is “maturity of faith,” which Benson and Elkin (1990) define as “a vibrant, life-transforming faith marked by a deep, personal relationship to a loving God and a consistent devotion to serving others.” Beers (2003) notes that a precondition for an individual’s movement to a larger circle is a negative or positive life situation that creates dissonance, an idea he appropriates from Fowler.

How Faith and Spirituality Are Developed in Higher Education

Finally, what are some factors that encourage the development of faith and spirituality in college? Astin et al. (2011) found there are many types of experiences that encourage spiritual development: study abroad, interdisciplinary studies, service learning, philanthropic giving, interracial interaction, leadership training, and contemplative practices. Aside from curricular and co-curricular activities, faculty also play a major role in students’ spiritual development, namely by encouraging them to explore meaning and purpose and to discuss religion and spirituality (Astin et al., 2011).

Parks (2019) also discusses the importance of mentoring communities to aid in faith development. They can provide opportunities to engage in differing perspectives (which might produce conscious conflict), develop habits of mind (e.g., dialogue, critical thought), and provide imaginative images rich and comprehensive enough for students to develop “worthy Dreams,” (which she defines as “imagined [possibilities] that [orient] meaning, purpose, and aspiration”) (Patton et al., 2016, p. 207). These mentoring

communities can provide a “network of belonging” as students navigate the uncertainty of faith changes (Parks, 2000, p. 135).

Revival

Revivalism and the History of Higher Education

As Sweet (1944/1965) notes, “there is a very close relationship between the history of higher education in America and revivalism” (p. 147). In fact, revival movements are woven into the history of higher education (Orr, 1971; Ringenberg, 2006; Rudolph, 1990; Sweet, 1944/1965). In each of the following movements, campus revivals took place, often in large numbers; and each had an impact on American higher education: The First Great Awakening, The Second Great Awakening, the 1857–58 Prayer Movement, The Revival of 1904–1908, The Campus Revivals in the Mid-Twentieth Century, and The Campus Revivals of 1970 (Beougher, 1995/2002). There was also a significant movement of campus revivals in 1995 (The Associated Press, 1995).

The First Great Awakening led to the founding of many colleges and universities (Beougher, 1995/2002; Sweet, 1944/1965). The Second Great Awakening has been characterized as having many college revivals (Rudolph, 1990). In fact, it began with student revivals (Beougher, 1995/2002; Sweet, 1944/1965). Most notably, the revival at Yale College in 1802 took on national significance and began a more general movement (Beougher, 1995/2002; Sweet, 1944/1965). During this period, many converted individuals felt a call to ministry, and more colleges sprung up to meet the demand for religious training (Luker, 1983; Ringenberg, 2006; Sweet, 1944/1965). In regard to the time period of the Lay Prayer Movement, Oberlin College became “one of the most

important revival centers in the country” under the leadership of Charles Finney from 1851 to 1866 (Sweet, 1944/1965, p. 150).

Rudolph (1990) states that 1858 was the last great revival year in the colleges. Harrold (2004) argues that throughout the 1870s, campus revivals significantly declined for a complex array of reasons as colleges focused on gradual forms of character development. However, campus revivals did continue into the twentieth century more regionally (Cairns, 1986). In the 1940s and 1950s, these revivals began in Christian colleges. During this time, many different fellowship groups emerged, examples of which would be Campus Crusade for Christ and Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship (Beougher, 1995/2002). On February 3, 1970, revival began at Asbury University and then traveled to Asbury Theological Seminary soon after. The revival was characterized by students praising God and confessing their sins publicly. The meetings continued for eight days—185 hours—without interruption (Hanke, 1970/2013). At least 130 colleges, seminaries, and Bible schools “had been touched by the revival outreach” by that summer, as Asbury students traveled to more schools and local churches (James, 1970/2013, p. 39). On January 22, 1995, a similar movement on Christian college campuses occurred, starting in Coggin Avenue Baptist Church and spreading to Howard Payne University and then “at least 30 campuses” by April 30 (The Associated Press, 1995).

Common Revival Themes

Many other themes could have been explored, but the themes discussed here were chosen because they most closely relate to student faith and spirituality, conditions that may facilitate transformation of faith and spirituality, and evidence of those transformations in the form of students’ actions.

The Presence of God and Spiritual Experience. The fundamental aspect of a revival is students' collective experience that they had been in the presence of God, most notably through the manifestation of God's presence in the third person of the Christian Trinity, the Holy Spirit (Beuogher, 1995/2002; Collier, 1995). For example, in the campus revival movements of 1904–1908, a Seattle Pacific College student said,

from the beginning God manifested His power and glory.... At times, the Spirit was so outpoured as to make it impossible to describe the scene.... Wave after wave of blessing, billow after billow of divine glory rolled over the entire congregation. (Watson as cited in Orr, 1971, p. 111)

People involved in revival may also have other emotional, intensified spiritual experiences and respond to those experiences in drastically various ways. For instance, McClymond (2004) notes experiences such as physical sensations of heat and electricity, lack of physical hunger or awareness of time, grief over sin, and joy over salvation, as well as responses such as exuberant singing and dancing, falling down or rolling on the ground, or the silence of a “divine hush” (pp. 8–9). The college revivals of 1783–1860 tended to be more “subdued, even solemn events” (Bushko, 1974, p. 45).

Conviction and Confession of Sin. One of the most distinct markers of revival is the felt conviction and public confession of sins (Cairns, 1986; Gleason, 2002; Orr, 1971; Rudolph, 1990). Students become aware of their own failures before a holy God, which compels them to confess, whether privately or publicly. For instance, in the 1995 awakenings at Christian colleges, students confessed to stealing, racism, sexual sin, cheating, and many others before their campus communities (The Associated Press, 1995). Orr (1971) says that reports of revivals indicate that “a sense of forgiveness and

joy which completely eclipsed the travail of repentance” always followed conviction and confession (p. 224).

Unity and Controversy. A sense of community and unity is also common among the revival participants. In the 1970 revival at Asbury, Hanke (1970/2013) recalls seeing students all over campus in groups of two with a Bible. He writes, “the spirit of unity was so real that everyone felt a common interest in and sympathy for the spiritual needs of others” (p. 17). In addition, as students seek and receive forgiveness from God, they also seek and receive forgiveness from one another (Dorsett, 2002). Revivalism was controversial and divisive earlier in American history, between and within denominations (Sweet, 1944/1965). However, since the end of the nineteenth century, revivalism had largely become interdenominational (Cairns, 1986; Smith, 1957/1965; Sweet, 1944/1965), as have been the collegiate student groups that have arisen from them such as the Young Man’s Christian Association (Gleason, 2002).

Individual Commitment. Revivalism “underscores the call to decision” (McClymond, 2004). During times of revival, Christians make personal re-commitments to Jesus Christ; those without faith make personal commitments to Jesus Christ in conversion. Various methods have been used throughout revival history to prompt people toward decision, like pastoral counseling, altar calls, inquiry rooms, and decision cards. (Cairns, 1986). Bushko (1974) wrote that a common value of religious revivals at American colleges from 1783 to 1860 was “active choice and commitment” in which making a decision to follow God followed by action was highly valued, especially when the commitment corresponded with the views of the college at which the revival occurred (p. 107).

Effects on Individuals: Morality, Discipline, and Academic Achievement.

Cairns (1986) writes, “because Christian character follows commitment to Christ, revival has always been followed by moral living” (p. 270). He goes on to note that revival caused individuals to avoid behaviors such as swearing, drunkenness, gambling, cheating, and domestic fighting. He also notes increases in charitable giving and church membership among those impacted (Cairns, 1986). Participating in a campus revival has been shown to significantly affect a student’s behavior on campus (Engbrecht, 2013; Orr, 1971). According to Orr (1971), “college awakenings have an almost immediate effect on the discipline and academic achievement of the students” (p. 224). To support this claim, Orr (1971) briefly mentions a “questionnaire on revivals on campus” in which individuals claimed that “discipline had been made easier” (p. 224). He goes on to specifically cite four college officials who commented on the improved discipline and academic achievement of their students following revivals (Orr, 1971). In addition, Bushko’s (1974) review of the college revivals from 1783 to 1860 led him to conclude that they generally “aligned student behavior much more closely to that which was expected of them (or hoped for) at the college they were attending” (p. 181). On the other hand, McClymond (2004) notes the lack of scholarly consensus on the long-term impact on individuals, while Sweet (1944/1965) indicates a large impact on individuals, but says that it is “impossible to assess accurately” (p. 140).

Effects on Community: Ministry, Missions, and Social Reform. Another effect of revival is that students (and others affected by revivals) became more involved in ministry and missions (Bushko, 1974; Engbrecht, 2013; Orr, 1971). They experienced a growing burden to serve and reach those who did not share their faith, both domestically and internationally. For example, Beougher (1995/2002) notes that “perhaps as many as

ten to fifteen thousand missionaries went overseas from college campuses” during the revivals of 1904 to 1908 (p. 40). Primarily, the goal of this outreach was evangelism and individual salvation; however, revivalists did not ignore broader social reform efforts (Smith, 1957/1965). In fact, Smith (1957/1965) argues in his book *Revivalism and Social Reform* (which concerns the revivals of 1840 to 1865 and their effects), that evangelicals recognized that “personal sin often had communal roots” (p. 152). The revivalists generally believed that Christ’s return was imminent; and in response, they were called to reform society, ridding it of its sinful ills, to usher in the kingdom of God on earth (Smith, 1957/1965). Bushko (1974) argues similarly about the college revivals of 1783 to 1860, saying that the advancement of “God’s word on earth” was a key value (p. 108). For this reason, revivalism has had an impact on emancipation of slaves, labor reform, prison reform, the temperance movement, rescue missions, founding orphanages, and other reform efforts (Cairns, 1986). It is not surprising, then, that McClymond (2004) finds the most evidence for the effectiveness of revivals to advance social reform in the latter half of the nineteenth century.

Systematic Studies of Student Spiritual Impact

There are two studies that examine the impact of campus revivals in a more systematic way. One is Mclaughlin’s (2015) study, “Exploring the Conceptual Compatibility of Transformative Learning Theory in Accounts of Christian Spiritual Renewal at Wheaton College in 1995.” In this study, he finds revival participants go through the ten-stage transformative learning process originally put forth by Mezirow (1991) and condensed into four stages by Herbers (1998). The revival participants had a disorienting experience, critically reflected on that experience, engaged in rational

dialogue about it, and then took action all in the realm of their spiritual development (McLaughlin, 2015).

Another is Collier's (1995) study, "The Significance of the Asbury Revival of 1970 for Some Aspects of the Spiritual Lives of the Participants." He found that out of his 136 participants, "89.6% maintained the same level or actually increased their use of four spiritual disciplines, willingness to quickly forgive others, the frequency with which they openly expressed love, their involvement in ministry, and their ability to live a morally pure life" in the 25 years following the revival. In addition, Collier (1995) finds that 92% of his respondents say that the revival still affects their spiritual lives today, overall concluding that this revival had a long-lasting significant impact on their spiritual formation.

Conclusion

Collier (1995) notes that "the literature on revival tends to view revival through a wide angle lens of social impact" (p. 3). His study filled a gap in the literature by looking at revival from the angle of individual spiritual formation from a ministry perspective. This research considered revival from the perspective of student development, particularly the faith and spirituality literature. The study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the shared experience of students who participated in a campus revival?
2. What impact, if any, does participation in a campus revival have on student faith and spirituality?

Chapter 3

Methodology

From the previous chapter, it becomes clear that campus revivals are, in fact, a significant historical phenomenon in higher education as the means and result of spiritual formation. However, the literature is scant when it comes to systematic study of the impact of revivals on individual lives, aside from personal accounts. There has been a resurgence in interest in faith and spirituality in the student development literature, but no research has been conducted connecting participation in a campus revival with student faith and spirituality. This chapter seeks to explain the methods for such a study that attempted to fill this gap in the literature.

Design

The design of this study was qualitative. Creswell (2013) explains that researchers should use a qualitative design when the issue being studied needs to be explored and variables that cannot be easily measured need to be identified. He emphasizes that qualitative research is necessary when researchers need “a *complex*, detailed understanding of the issue” and when the researchers want to “write in a *literary, flexible style* that conveys stories...” (p. 48). The issue of how campus revival impacts student faith and spirituality was best explored qualitatively. The connection between these two constructs had not been explored from a student development perspective. Neither spirituality nor revival are easily measured. For these reasons, the constructs were best studied through listening and reporting the complexity of participants’ stories and the meaning they brought to their subjective experiences.

This study employed a phenomenological design. According to Creswell (2013), “a phenomenological study describes the common meaning for several individuals of their lived experiences of a concept or phenomenon” (p. 76). It is a design in which the researcher “suspends all judgments about what is real” (Creswell, 2013, p. 77). The purpose of a phenomenology is to condense these individual experiences into a core description or essence of the phenomenon. The reasoning for this choice lies in the nature of the research questions. In answering the first question, the researcher sought to describe the essence of the revival experience based on common meanings across participants. In answering the second question, the researcher sought to describe the essence of the impact of revival involvement on the faith and spirituality of the participants.

Context and Participants

This study concerned alumni of a four-year, liberal arts, inter-denominational, evangelical institution in the Midwest. The institution experienced revival during the movement of campus revivals in the spring of 1995 (Beougher, 1995/2002). The participants of this study were alumni at this institution who were enrolled when that revival began and participated in the revival services.

The researcher invited participants by sending out an email through the institution’s alumni office to the graduating class years of 1998, 1997, 1996, and 1995: a total of 1233 recipients. Seventeen alumni expressed interest by the time the researcher needed to begin interviews. After removing two who only wished to be interviewed if the researcher needed more research subjects, the researcher took a random sample of 12 alumni out of the remaining 15. Of the 12 that the researcher invited, nine continued on as participants to be interviewed. After the initial invitation, another ten alumni expressed

interest; however, time constraints prevented the researcher from interviewing any more participants.

The sample of nine participants consisted of five males and four females. The sample also consisted of a variety of class years (one Freshman, three Sophomores, three Juniors, and two Seniors) as well as majors (environmental biology, secondary art education, English education, business, theater arts, mass communication, athletic training, Biblical literature, and history) at the time of the revival.

Procedures

Before interviewing the participants, the researcher conducted a pilot interview and a short focus group to ensure that the questions were not biased and that the interview protocol would yield data to answer the research questions. After selecting participants, the researcher conducted one-on-one interviews with the participants over Zoom video conferencing or by phone if preferred. The researcher asked semi-structured, open-ended questions about their experiences during the revival and its impact on various aspects of their faith and spirituality (see Appendix for interview protocol). These open-ended questions allowed the respondent to “best voice their experiences unconstrained by any perspectives of the researcher or past research findings” (Creswell, 2012, p. 218). These recorded interviews were each approximately 15 to 45 minutes in length.

Data Analysis

To begin the data analysis process, the recorded interviews were transcribed and given a preliminary exploratory analysis to “obtain a general sense of the data” (Creswell, 2012, p. 243). Then, the researcher coded the data to “make sense of the text” (Creswell,

2012, p. 243). Finally, the researcher condensed these codes into broad themes that addressed the two research questions:

1. What is the shared experience of students who participated in a campus revival?
2. What impact, if any, does participation in a campus revival have on student faith and spirituality?

Chapter 4

Results

From the literature, it is clear that campus revivals have been the means and result of students' faith and spiritual development in higher education history, but little research has been conducted on individual impact from a student development perspective. The current study sought to understand the shared experience of participation in a campus revival as well as the relationship between participation in a campus revival and student faith and spirituality using a phenomenological design. The researcher interviewed nine participants, each assigned a lettered pseudonym to protect anonymity, and then coded the data to search for themes.

Upon analyzing the data, five themes emerged, which relate both to the shared experience of participating in a revival and to the impact of that shared experience on student faith or spirituality: confession, relationships and connection with others, relationship with or understanding of God, the presence of God, and prior faith experiences. The themes are discussed in order of their prevalence.

Theme 1: Confession

All nine participants discussed confession as a part of their revival experience. However, the nature of their involvement in confession varied. Five out of nine participants mentioned or discussed confessing to various sins in small groups during a revival service or publicly on the chapel stage. For instance, Participant A told the story of the Holy Spirit convicting her of hating her father, leading her to confess this sin during one of the revival services before the student body in attendance. The remaining

four, each to a different extent, discussed watching confessions or supporting others after their confessions—either friends or others in the campus community. For instance, Participant C said, “I was good friends with some people who did some pretty major confessing during the revival, like very publicly with a microphone in a non-premeditated way, you know, it just happened.”

While Participant I was unsure how confession affected him and Participant F thought his own public confession was surprisingly “underwhelming,” most participants directly related public confession to various personal significant impacts. Participant A noted how it gave her peace knowing she was committed to change, enabled others to keep her accountable, and gave her a picture of what a Godly community looks like (as she was forgiven and accepted by others). She also noted that the public confession and subsequent prayer made the experience more “real”: as she confessed and people prayed for her, she became convinced that God really would help her forgive and reconcile with her father. Participant B noted an instantaneous sense of freedom upon confessing. Participant E said that she was emotionally moved by watching the sincere confessions, but—when she saw a student confess that he and his girlfriend were sleeping together—she grew uncomfortable after finding out that his girlfriend was exposed without her consent. This incident made her skeptical of the revival, and she stopped participating. Finally, others discussed how confession affected their relationships and connection with others, which will be discussed within the next theme.

Theme 2: Relationships and Connection With Others

Eight out of nine participants reported that participation in the revival positively impacted their relationships and connection with others. In fact, several participants noted connection with others as a key part of the revival experiences itself. For instance, Participant F said, “but what I remember more than anything about the experience at [institution] was just the feeling of unity and forgiveness and grace that permeated everything.” Then, when discussing meeting eyes with another student while they were both praying for someone, he said,

and there was just this, almost like an understanding that we’re just here for each other. Like, people that you knew, but you weren’t really in relationship with, but we were all there for the same purpose. There was a commonality. And just a unity, I would say, is probably a good word.

Participant C and F also explicitly emphasized the importance of the revival as a group encounter with God. Participant C said,

sometimes I think maybe in America, myself specifically, but also in America, we kind of are very individualistic about our experiences with God. And it helped me see that I am part of the body. I am part of the community that is experiencing God together versus like just having my own relationship with him personally, that brought that more to light.

Other participants emphasized improvements in personal relationships with friends on campus, family members, or noted that the strength of the campus community improved overall as a consequence of the revival. Participant H, a senior chaplain when the revival occurred (who had been praying for revival since his freshman year with a group of students) said,

I think that it definitely solidified my relationship with people who are in my inner circle, especially people who had been praying for an event like this. It was intensely bonding to have people, you know, kind of have an upper room community that was begging God to show up and then have that community immediately evolve into a Pentecost community where God does in fact show up.

In addition, Participant A explained how this revival in 1995 was the catalyst of a four-and-a-half year process of forgiving and reconciling with her father before he died in December 1999.

Finally, Participant G thought that the revival “deepened” the community at the institution and “made it a lot stronger.” However, in the long term, it is important to note that others only emphasized the revival strengthening their own relational circle or that they, personally, felt more connected to the campus community. For instance, Participant A said that it grounded and rooted her at the institution, making her feel safe and at home. For Participant I, this overall theme—although it did appear—was not salient.

It is also important to note that some participants specifically linked changes in their relationships and connections with others to particular aspects of their revival experiences: most notably confession or the sense of a corporate experience of God’s presence (a theme to be discussed later).

In connection with confession, participants commonly spoke about a number of aspects related to their relationships and connections with others: a sense of commonality with others as sinners in need of forgiveness, a recognition of the hiddenness of the struggles and sins of others, a greater willingness to be or value for being open and authentic with one another during and after the revival, as well as a personal or communal move to care for others struggling with difficult things.

For instance, Participant A, who confessed, noted her connection to others by saying, “we all have awful things that we are carrying around, and we all need God and we all need his forgiveness, and we need each other.”

While reflecting on viewing others’ confessions, Participant C spoke about the hiddenness of others’ struggles: “...you meet them and you might even be really good friends with them, but you don’t really know some things that are really going on in their lives.” Then, citing a specific example of her recognition of the hiddenness of others’ struggles, she expressed her surprise at discovering that a number of students in her residence hall struggled with eating disorders: “And I thought, how could that possibly be that I did not know that? We had a community bathroom, you know? Like how did I not know that? But they were struggling with it anyway.”

Participant F noted the way that the revival led him to value authenticity, saying, and even to this day, I think authenticity is a value that I hold in esteem in part because I saw what happens when we can be real with one another. It allows us to come into deeper relationship with one another and encourage one another into deeper relationship with Christ and actually get somewhere. We don’t do anyone any favors by putting on a façade and acting as though everything’s okay or acting as though we have it all together.

Participant D, as another example, spoke about the revival affecting his student leadership in his residence hall, specifically his ability to pursue authenticity with others, saying he “had much more of an opportunity to get real with others following that revival during my college experience.” Throughout his interview, he used the words “transparent” and “authentic” to describe his interactions with others (during and after the revival) and his own self as a leader.

Participant D also talked about how the revival led to him showing more care for what others are going through, mentioning it opened up “paths of empathy” for him.

Participant G spoke about care for others when she discussed praying for and walking through recovery with a friend with an eating disorder. As a more general observation about the culture of caring for others on campus, Participant C said,

and what made me know that it wasn't just like this emotional event and then it was over type of thing was that we were just more open with each other in general and less afraid to bring up stuff that was hard. To my memory, we didn't really have a counseling center at the time. You just would go to the campus pastor's office. There wasn't as much emphasis on getting help for yourself. And so we all kind of did that more for each other than we would have done before.

Participant C also mentioned faculty offering to discuss spiritual concerns, and

Participant D mentioned supportive small groups emerging from the revival.

Finally, specifically in regards to relationships with others connected to a sense of corporately experiencing the presence of God, Participant B said,

yeah, we went a lot deeper, right? I mean, when you are, uh, you know, there's friendships, right? Uh, people that you talk to, but when you experienced God together in that way and you were confessing things to the Lord together in that way, and then you're seeing God set you free from certain things. So you're actually seeing God do miracles in your life and then in your friend's life. And you're witnessing that together. There's no greater bond than that, right?

Theme 3: Relationship With or Understanding of God

Eight of out nine participants discussed the way the revival impacted their relationship with or understanding of God; however, there was considerable variability,

making it difficult to generalize more fully. To provide more detail to this theme, specific examples must be given. Participant A emphasized recognizing her need for God in order to change. Similarly, Participants B and F both emphasized receiving grace from God rather than striving to serve God based on rules. This was particularly important for Participant F, who said,

this experience changed the trajectory of my spiritual development in a way that I pivoted away from a rigid, regimented structure of rules and regulations and pivoted toward a grace-based relationship with a savior who extended and offered what I needed.

Participant B and G both emphasized that their relationship with God became a more “constant communion” or more everyday. Participant D noted that the experience rooted him in his faith and made it more real because he was “serving the living God.” He also noted that seeing God show up so “tangibly” was influential in his lifelong emphasis on God’s control and authority over His world, His sovereignty. In fact, a number of other participants highlighted God’s authority, sovereignty, or power in the earth. For instance, Participant H said, “...no corner of the world is untouched by the reach of a powerful God.” In discussing the “fear-based thinking” and “culture war mentality” he notices in his fellow Christians, he said,

the [institution] experience reminded us, like, I don’t have to defend anything. All I have to do is get in the wake of the Holy Spirit who’s driving boldly into the world and confronting darkness and despair in all of its different forms. And that gave me a ton of confidence, and it continues to give me hope and joy for what the kingdom is and what it can look like for our generation and the generations to come.

Participant C said that the revival was “the beginning of my real experience of the Holy Spirit” and that she began to understand the concept of needing God to wake her up from complacency at various points in life. She also noted that the revival (specifically the spontaneity of the event) was one influence in her living her life with a greater expectancy of an everyday encounter with God. She offered,

like all I’m doing, maybe all I’m doing is just spending time with my family and hanging out with friends, something very very normal, but now I have an awareness that something could happen here. God could cause someone to connect with me in a way that I never expected. I just got up in the morning and thought it would be a normal day. So much more expectant of an everyday encounter with God and actually looking forward to that as opposed to being afraid.

Similar to the previous theme, although Participant I mentioned this theme, it was not particularly salient.

Theme 4: Presence of God

Six out of nine participants specifically mentioned or discussed God’s presence, particularly through the working of the Holy Spirit during the revival services. For instance, Participant D said,

it was the most fervent I’ve ever seen the Holy Spirit work. I’ve been a Christian for many years and that was just tangibly one of the few times I felt like “wow, you know, the Holy Spirit is here and is overwhelming.” And it’s not something

that I'm just uniquely feeling. It was spread around a large group of people, like hundreds of people.

Theme 5: Prior Faith Experiences

Five out of nine participants highlighted their prior faith experiences when discussing how they participated in the revival and the way it impacted them. In some cases, these prior experiences significantly impacted how they reacted to and participated in the revival as well as how it impacted them. Participant A and I noted that they had never experienced a revival before. Participant B explained that he had never experienced God's presence before the revival. Both Participants C and F explained that their previous faith experiences were more reserved, traditional, and ordered. For instance, Participant C said,

I had always experienced God and spirituality as a kind of buttoned up thing. The thing that needed to be done in a certain way. And specifically, there was no structure to the whole thing [the revival] at all. Like nobody knew, what was going to happen.

For Participant C, her prior faith experience really caused her to emphasize aspects of the revival that others did not. For instance, she emphasized more than others the presence of the Holy Spirit and was the only one who highlighted the power of everyone praying in their own words aloud together.

Particularly relevant in the discussion about prior faith experiences is Participant E. Because of her Pentecostal/Assemblies of God faith background, she had experienced revivals in the past. At the time of the revival, she was growing skeptical of Pentecostalism and considering more intellectual rather than emotional expressions of faith. Along with discomfort with one of the confessions she heard, she cites these prior

faith experiences as reasons for disengaging with the revival after a short time. In this way, the revival cemented her turn toward a more intellectual faith. Because others engaged the revival with fervor, she notes that her choice to evaluate the experience differently and refrain from participation also gave her more confidence in her own assessment of spiritual matters, furthering the development of her faith apart from others' assessments. Because of this difference, she also highlighted aspects of the revival response that others did not mention, namely the fact that faculty members gave talks placing the current revival in historical perspective.

Other Findings

In describing their revival experience, four participants mentioned prayer and four mentioned worship. Four spoke of students from another institution coming to tell about the revival happening on their campus and how that may have sparked the revival, and three mentioned a speaker that may have been influential in the revival (though no one could remember the individual's name or his message). Four participants described the revival in terms that indicated it was organic, natural, or unforced. Finally, it is worth noting that six participants described the experience as unique and all nine described it as emotional. In regard to the emotional nature of the event, Participant C described how noteworthy it was to her that so many people, especially men, were crying out of joy or confession, expressing their emotions in appropriate ways.

Conclusion

Based on the frequency and magnitude of the responses, the essence of the revival experience consisted of a unique, emotional group experience that included both an awareness of the presence of God and some involvement in confession—either through confessing themselves, watching others confess, or supporting others after their

confession. In terms of impact on faith and spirituality, the data reveal that it positively impacted both relationships with God and with others for most participants. However, it is important to note that the way in which their relationships with God and others varied considerably in both degree and manner. The revival affected one participant's faith in a novel way, in part due to her prior faith experiences.

Chapter 5

Discussion

Based on the themes illustrated in the previous chapter (confession, relationships and connection with others, relationship with or understanding of God, the presence of God, and prior faith experience), this chapter will discuss these findings in connection to previous literature in two sections, which represent the two research questions: The Revival Experience and Impact on Faith and Spirituality. This chapter will also offer implications for practice and future research based on this study as well as limitations of the current research.

The Revival Experience

The results of this study confirm that core aspects of a revival experience are conviction and confession of sin (Cairns, 1986; Gleason, 2002; Orr, 1971; Rudolph, 1990), the presence of God (Beuogher, 1995/2002; Collier, 1995), and unity among revival participants (Hanke 1970/2013). Participants also described the event as unique and emotional. Considering that revivals have been happening in American higher education institutions since their beginnings, it is notable that such core elements of the experience appear consistently across time.

However, it is important to recognize the variability in the degree and manner that students experienced these elements and the differences in revivals across time periods. For instance, although many participants emphasized experiencing the presence of God at the revival services, others did not explicitly mention it. In terms of revivals across time, with regard to confession of sin, it is clear that in some other time periods, the conviction

of sin was agonizing and overwhelming (Orr, 1971), which does not appear to be the case in this revival. As Participant H put it,

it's not like every service was people on their faces weeping, but there were definitely aspects of that in some of the services or in parts of some of the services, where people really did feel convicted. I remember, uh, we try not to over sensationalize it.

Perhaps the reason for this diminished intensity is that campus revivals have been declining in America since the 1870s (Harrold, 2004), even as McClymond (2004) says this era may be a golden age of revivals from a global perspective. It may also be shifts in theological emphases over time or the way these particular participants experienced the event.

Impact on Faith and Spirituality

The results of this study also show that participation in the revival contributed to significant impacts on faith and spirituality, as noted in the themes *relationship with or understanding of God* as well as *relationships and connection with others*. The fact that these two themes represent faith and spirituality development is well-attested in the literature (Beers, 2003; Fowler, 1981; Love & Talbot, 1999; Parks, 2019). For instance, aspects of Love and Talbot's (1999) definition of spiritual development involve developing a greater connectedness to others and an increasing openness to exploring a relationship with a higher power.

In regard to relationship with or understanding of God, it appears that a number of participants had what Fowler (1981) cites as an "intensification experience," in which a religious experience has the impact of "renewing or revivifying a person's faith outlook, but with neither a structural change nor a content change" (p. 285). For example, some

participants reported that their pursuit of God became more constant or that the relationship became closer or stronger. Others indicated shifts in the “content” of their faith (Fowler, 1981). For instance, Participant F in particular indicated that he pivoted from a legalistic and rules-based relationship with God to a more grace-based relationship. Participant C indicated that the revival was her first real experience of the Holy Spirit as a member of the Christian Trinity.

In regard to relationship and connection with others, the data reveals little indication that students became more involved in ministry, missions, and social reform as a result of this revival (aside from Participant H, who said the revival was an “exclamation point” on his call to ministry, and other brief allusions from other participants). Although the literature often connects revival to ministry, missions, and social reform (Orr, 1971; Smith, 1944/1965), these nine participants did not expound on this impact. Instead, many participants emphasized the way that it transformed their connections with family, friends, and their campus community, making them closer and more open and caring in these relationships. In fact, it could be argued that they reported the campus community becoming more like Park’s (2019) vision of a “mentoring community,” a “network of belonging” (Parks, 2000, p. 135). This finding supports the emphasis of Astin et al. (2011) on caring *for* (charitable involvement) and *about* (ethic of caring) others as a measure of spiritual development. A number of participants also emphasized authenticity in their relationships (particularly as a result of the confessions), which connects with one aspect of Love and Talbot’s (1999) definition of spiritual development: “pursuing authenticity, genuineness, and wholeness as an aspect of identity development” (p. 364).

Finally, it is interesting to discuss the way that prior faith experience connects with this study and the literature. Participants C, E, and F most fully expounded on how their prior faith experiences influenced their processing of the revival and its impact on them. It is noteworthy that all three made a move away from the faith with which they grew up. For Participants C and F, the move to embrace the revival was a move away from the more traditional, reserved, ordered, and potentially legalistic faith of their younger years. For Participant E, her move away from the revival was also a move away from her Pentecostal/Assemblies of God upbringing and toward a more intellectual faith. These findings support Parks's (2019) and Fowler's (1981) theories that emphasize emerging adulthood as a time of seeking out a faith of one's own. The revival provided a catalyst for these students' faith exploration in a new community. In particular, Participant E explained how the revival coincided with a developmental shift in which she was starting to form her own faith apart from simply relying on her community and upbringing to decide for her. Considering that she was also moving toward a more abstract, conceptual, and critically reflective faith during this time, the revival could have played a part in continuing her movement from Fowler's stage 3 (synthetic-conventional faith) to Fowler's stage four (individuative-reflective faith), although any firm conclusions about her faith stages would require a more in-depth interview with this participant.

Implications for Practice

First, because several participants especially highlighted the fact that the revival was a whole campus experience, recommendations for practice based on this research

would include developing programs that invite the entire campus community together for a meaningful shared experience concerning a matter of faith or spirituality. Although a revival is clearly different from a chapel program, a campus tradition, or a spiritual renewal or emphasis week, this research brings the power of a shared experience to the fore: to solidify community and connections and aid in the development of faith and spirituality.

Second, because nearly all participants spoke about the significance of confession in various ways, recommendations for practice based on this research would include providing opportunities for students to share the difficult, even sinful aspects of their lives with appropriate vulnerability. Students carry deep struggles and wounds in their hearts that could heal through the witness, accountability, and support of a caring campus community. Although this must be encouraged with prayerful care and only within small, trustworthy groups (unless the Holy Spirit leads the community to more public confessions), this research still highlights the importance of vulnerability in building spiritually vital, authentic campus communities.

Third, since a majority of the participants highlighted the presence of God (particularly in the work of the Holy Spirit) as a key aspect of the revival, an important implication for practice for faith-based institutions would be to seek, both communally and individually, that God's presence be made known on campus. Although it is possible that aspects of the revival that led to positive spiritual changes in students can be replicated in everyday practice, certainly no program or strategy can replace the manifest presence of God in such a special way. In addition, certainly no program or strategy can positively impact a student's faith or spirituality without the Holy Spirit's involvement.

Fourth, considering that a majority of the participants noted or spoke openly about their prior faith experiences (and its impact on their processing of the revival), this research highlights the importance of higher education professionals increasing their sensitivity to the diversity of faith experiences that students bring with them to their institutions. Since their prior faith experiences shape their responses to new ones, it would behoove higher education professionals to have a greater awareness of their students' faith histories if they are to appropriately program and facilitate a campus culture conducive to spiritual development.

Fifth, the nature of this study may lead higher education professionals to consider how to distinguish between healthy and unhealthy revival or aspects of revival. First, in regard to confession, this research revealed, albeit minimally, that students sharing inappropriately is an unhealthy aspect of revival. Second, although not deriving directly from the results, many others aspects of unhealthy revival involve misplaced focus. Healthy revivals focus on the Holy Spirit's work in revealing Christ, bringing about repentance, transforming lives, and leading Christians to minister to others; unhealthy revivals, on the other hand, do not. For instance, a misplaced focus could be a person or particular extraordinary manifestations of the Spirit (simply for excitement rather than glorifying God). In addition, another misplaced focus could be the self in comparison with others, breeding attitudes of spiritual superiority in those who had certain experiences or inferiority in those who did not. Overall, as Moore (1995) wrote to Christian student development professionals following the campus revival movement of 1995, "first, we should remember that it is not revival we seek, it is God" (p. 8). Although revival is certainly a significant way that God has moved and continues to move, Moore (1995) reminds his readers to keep the right ultimate focus.

Finally, another question this research raises is the institution's role in campus revival. Considering the results indicate it had a positive impact on most participants' faith and spirituality, it makes sense for institutions to take a supportive, positive approach toward revival. If spiritually mature Christian higher education professionals prayerfully discern the revival to be healthy and authentic, institutions could express this supportive approach in a number of ways. One way would be to provide Biblical frameworks and historical contexts by which students can interpret their experiences in the form of statements, programs, or chapel messages. Another way would be to endorse the revival more explicitly and publicly. In some cases, it may even make sense to cancel classes to provide space for students to spend time with God and one another. Regardless of the approach, institutions should encourage their faculty and staff to process experiences with students. Doing so will not only mitigate the unhealthy aspects of revival and ensure that hurting students are cared for, but it will also help nurture long term spiritual formation as students have opportunities to reflect on how these experiences will affect their spiritual lives with trusted adults.

Implications for Future Research

One implication for future research would be to study multiple campus revivals that occurred in different time periods, different institutions, or both. In this case, the researcher could both contrast the data from the two revivals as well as gain greater insight into the shared experience and individual impact common across revivals.

Another implication for future research would be to study a more recent, or even current campus revival. In the case of a current campus revival, the researcher could conduct a longitudinal study to track more carefully the impact on faith and spirituality over time.

Limitations

One limitation of the current study is the relatively small number of participants. Despite the volume of available participants, time constraints prevented the researcher from interviewing all who were interested. More perspectives could have strengthened or nuanced existing themes or introduced new themes. The study would have also benefited from the researcher offering an alternative option to a full interview for potential participants (such as a short, open-ended survey). In this way, the researcher could have collected data from a greater percentage of the alumni enrolled at the institution at the time of the revival, which may have revealed different experiences and levels of spiritual impact.

Another limitation is that the research only interviewed participants in a single revival at one institution (an interdenominational, evangelical institution of approximately 1,900 students in the Midwest) in 1995. Considering that the nature of revivals as well as their impact has changed significantly over time and varies across institutions, this is certainly a limitation. In addition, although there are benefits to collecting data from participants 25 years after a revival occurred (such as the wisdom and extended context the participants bring to their reflections), individuals who would have more recently participated would be able to remember more clearly what they experienced and how they had been impacted.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this phenomenological study sought the answers to two related questions: What is the shared experience of those who participated in a campus revival? What impact, if any, does participation in a revival have on student faith and spirituality? The essence of the revival experience consisted of a unique, emotional group experience that included both an awareness of the presence of God and some involvement in

confession—either through confessing themselves, watching others confess, or supporting others after their confession. In terms of impact on faith and spirituality, the data reveal that the revival positively impacted both their relationships with God and with others for most participants. However, the way in which their relationships with God and others were impacted varied considerably in both degree and manner. The revival affected one participant's faith in a novel way, in part due to her prior faith experiences. Based on this study, the researcher recommended all-campus faith and spirituality programming, providing opportunities for appropriate vulnerability, seeking the presence of God for one's campus both individually and corporately, and gaining a greater awareness of students' faith histories. The researcher also discussed distinguishing between healthy and unhealthy revival as well as the role of the institution in relation to revivals.

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Appendix

Interview Protocol

I. Greeting

II. Informed Consent

III. Interview Overview

IV. Preliminary Questions

1. In what year of college were you in when the 1995 revival occurred?
2. What was your major at the time?

V. Opening

3. What does revival mean to you? Would you use another word for this idea?

VI. Revival Experiences

4. When did you first recognize that [your institution] was in the midst of a revival?
How did you react?
5. Could you tell me the story of your participation in this revival?
6. Do you have any other experiences related to this revival that you would like to share?

VII. Impact on Faith/ Spirituality

7. How, if at all, did participation in this revival impact your view of or relationship with God?
8. In what ways, if any, did participation in this revival change your understanding of yourself?
9. How, if at all, did participation in this revival impact your view of or relationship with others? Your campus community? The broader communities in which you are a part?
10. How, if at all, did participation in this revival impact your view of the world?
11. In what ways, if any, did participation in this revival affect your faith/ spirituality throughout college and/or life after college?
12. Were there specific aspects of your revival experiences that were influential in these changes?

VIII. Closing

13. Is there anything else you would like to add?

